

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

Britain's Premier ASL Journal

Issue 16

November '97

UK £2.00

US \$4.00



**AVALON HILL
BRINGS COURT
ACTION AGAINST
CRITICAL HIT!**

See Page 3

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ASLOK - *ASL* the American Way! A British View **ALTERNATIVE CRITICAL HITS** - spice up your CH's
INTENSIVE FIRE '97 - The UK's biggest *ASL* gathering **OLD MACDONALD** - Chapter H Advice

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EMOTICONS

With the growth of the InterNet, emoticons have originated to allow people to show expressions in text. I find these very useful for the printed word in general, so you'll see plenty of them in View From The Trenches.

An emoticon is created with keyboard characters and read with the head tilted to the left. Some typical emoticons are:

- :-) humour or smiley
- ;-) winking
- :-> devious smile
- <g> grin
- :-(sad
- :-o shocked or surprised
- #-(hung-over

PREP FIRE

"We have however, and will continue, to aggressively protect our intellectual property relating to ASL™. If you produce or distribute products which infringe on our marks, or trade on our 'look and feel' we urge you to cease and desist immediately."

With those words, Jackson Dott, President of The Avalon Hill Game Company has announced that AH will no longer tolerate anyone else producing ASL material.

With that, hello and welcome to what could be the last issue of *View From The Trenches*.

In it's current incarnation.

One way or another, I shall continue to produce something that allows us British ASLers (and any overseas ASLers who are interested) to communicate, share ideas, and exchange information about the game referred to by Kurt Martin in *Rout Report 1* as "Avalon Hill's best little marriage breaker".

Anyway, for further details on this important event see opposite for the court order and a statement from CH, and page five for my views (and some comments from members of the InterNet ASL Mailing List) and some thoughts on the possible ramifications of this action.

Unfortunately the coverage I have allocated to this event has crowded out the INTENSIVE FIRE '97 report and pictures I had lined up for this issue :- (I have managed to squeeze in some comments from two newcomers to INTENSIVE FIRE, as well as the results, and hopefully will include some of the photos in the next few issues of *VFTT*.

Anyway, I don't want to end on a sour note, so can I interest you in coming to Leicester next June/July for a mini-ASL tournament? My thought is to have three rounds on Saturday (starting at 10am) and one on Sunday. This allows you to travel up early on Saturday morning and drive home Sunday evening (a three hour drive to Leicester is practical from almost anywhere in England, so someone could leave home at 6am Saturday morning and still be here in time for the action to begin). This means you won't need to take any time off from work, and will only have to pay for a room for one night. My reasoning for this is that June/July is the summer holidays, when the married types among you may have to go on

Continued on page 15

COVER: American troops wade ashore in Normandy.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES is the bi-monthly British ASL journal. It costs £2.00 per issue (overseas £3.00), with a year's subscription costing £10.00 (overseas £15.00). Payment should be in pounds sterling, with cheques made out to PETE PHILLIPPS. Readers are reminded to check their address label to see when their subscription ends.

Issue 17 will be out in January.

Back issue prices are:

- VFTT '95* £4.00 (overseas £6.00)
- VFTT 7 - 9* £1.00 (overseas £2.00)
- VFTT 10 - 13* £1.50 (overseas £2.50)
- VFTT 14/15* £3.00 (overseas £4.00)

All comments are welcome. Even better, contribute. Write an article. Design a scenario. Share your ASL experiences with others. *VFTT* allows you to communicate with other ASLers. Don't be a silent voice.

VIEW FROM THE TRENCHES

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In the United States District Court for the District of Maryland

Monarch Avalon, Inc. et al.
Plaintiffs

v Civil Action No. MJG-97-3517

Ray Tapio , et al.
Defendants

ORDER

A hearing was held on Plaintiffs' Motion for Preliminary Injunction on October 31, 1997. With the assistance of the Court, the parties stipulated, without prejudice to any position which may be taken subsequently, to the entry of the following Order. Based upon the stipulation, and until a full evidentiary hearing on the Motion for Preliminary Injunction, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that:

1. Defendants, their officers, agents, servants and employees and any persons in active concert or participation shall not advertise, offer for sale, or publish the following products:

- a) Critical Hit Volume 1
- b) Critical Hit Volume 2
- c) Critical Hit Volume 3 No. 1
- d) Critical Hit Issue No. 3
- e) Platoon Leader
- f) ASL News Pack
- g) Scroungin ASL News
- h) Jatkasota
- i) Rout Pack 1
- j) Rout Pack II and
- k) ASL '96 Pack

2. The defendants, their officers, their agents, servants and employees and persons in active concert or participation with them, may continue to advertise, distribute, offer for sale, and publish, the following products:

- a) Platoon Leader 2.0
- b) Critical Hit, Vol. 4 no. 1
- c) Gembloux The Feint: and
- d) All American (Timmes Orchard and II (Kellam's Bridge)

3. The Defendants, their officers, agents, servants and employees and persons in active concert or participation with them may continue to advertise, distribute, offer for sale and publish the following products subject to the following conditions:

a) Critical Hit Volume 4 No. 2 may be distributed only after a sticker is affixed over the designation "Featuring Adv. Sqd. Leader" in the upper left hand corner of the cover. Such stickers shall be supplied by the Plaintiffs to be shipped via Federal Express for the earliest delivery on Monday, November 9, 1997 and shall be of a reasonably similar color to the cover. Defendants shall affix the stickers prior to distribution.

b) Aussie- ASL '97 Pack may be distributed only after a sticker is affixed to each product which clearly indicates the product is not endorsed by Monarch Avalon, Inc. or The Avalon Hill Game Company. Such sticker shall be designed, produced and affixed by Defendants. The stickers shall read as follows: "This product is not endorsed by The Avalon Hill Game Company" and shall not be less than 12 point font.

4. Defendants shall notify their distributors of the need to place the above referred stickers on products already in distributors possession within three weeks of this Order. The letter to be sent to distributors is to be reviewed and approved by Plaintiffs' counsel prior to distribution.

5. The Defendants, their officers, agents, servants and employees may not advertise, distribute, offer for sale, or publish any products which rely upon the ASL Trademark, the ASL gaming system, ASL Rules, nor advertise, distribute, offer for sale, publish ASL Scenarios, nor any item which contains ASL scenarios, without the prior written consent of the Court.

6. It is explicitly understood that the designation of the products contained in this order is without prejudice to the parties.

7. Subject to the terms of this Order and the photocopying of the records, the items seized on October 27, 1997 shall be promptly returned to the Defendants. The records copied shall remain in the custody and control of the Plaintiffs' counsel and shall not be revealed to any third party or the Plaintiffs' officers or employees for two weeks from the date of this Order. During that time period, counsel for the Defendants shall identify any confidential or privileged documents, and propose any protective order which they believe to be appropriate.

Judge Marvin J. Garbis 11/5/97
United States District Court
District of Maryland

A statement from Raymond J. Tapio President of Critical Hit!, Inc.

This statement is issued with the authorization of Federal Court Judge, Hon. Marvin J. Garbis. It is made for the sole purpose of preventing false information from being spread over the internet.

On Monday October 27, 1997 representatives of Monarch Avalon in the form of Jackson Y. Dott, President and A. Eric Dott, Chairman, entered my private residence at approximately 7:50 AM, accompanied by counsel Charles J. Morton of Wright, Constable and Skeen, a Baltimore law firm. They were also accompanied by a Federal Marshall using a court order obtained ex parte; an ex parte order is one obtained without my counsel present.

Our position is that this order was obtained based on misleading information presented to the court by plaintiff and their counsel. Case law including Time Warner Entertainment Company against Jane Does #1-2 and John Does #1-10 calls for serious sanctions against plaintiffs and their counsel in the case of improperly seeking an order for seizure. A hearing on the appropriateness of the issuance of the order and the manner it was carried out by Avalon Hill in our case will take place in the future.

On Friday, October 31, 1997 the Critical Hit legal team assembled in Baltimore to begin the process of addressing this case. The result of this long day of hearings was a judicial order returning ALL records and inventory of Critical Hit!, Inc., including my personal effects. Following the hearing, the judge ordered that the TRO with respect to certain product, be lifted. Specifically, we will continue to sell CH merchandise Platoon Leader 2.0 and all PL 2.0 products, including Armored Stand, Dzerhezinsky Tractor Works; any ALL AMERICAN products, Gembloux the Feint, Critical Hit magazines, ASL News Pack 1, and the Aussie '97 Pack.

Today our attorneys brought the false and inaccurate information disseminated on the internet to the attention of the court and the Hon. Marvin J. Garbis authorized us to inform the public that we remain in business, able to sell our product, and this litigation will not interfere with our ability to fulfill orders.

Critical Hit!, Inc. is committed to publishing its magazine, including scenarios, and other products. In keeping with the court's order, orders for merchandise are being filled and shipped to distributors at this time. All orders will be shipped this weekend.

Raymond J. Tapio, President, 11/5/97

INCOMING THE CRUSADERS

Blood Reef: Tarawa has been delayed by some perceived imbalances in the CG. MMP also want to add a new CG prior to release. However MMP hope the delay will only be slight, and "promises to make the module that much better."

The General Volume 31, Number 6 should be shipping any time now. Of interest to ASLers will be the in-depth analyses of action in *Kampfgruppe Peiper*.

The new *HASL* module from Heat of Battle, *Berlin: Red Vengeance* is selling extremely well, with a large order just shipped to their distributors. Heat of Battle do not expect stocks to last much longer and according to Eddie Zeman "We probably will NOT reprint *B: RV*." Their advice is to order now rather than wait until the New Year. *B: RV* is available for \$25.00 from Heat of Battle, PO BOX 15073, Newport Beach, CA 92659.

Dispatches From The Bunker is a new newsletter from the States. The first issue contains two early war scenarios - "Brasche Encounters" is set in France in 1940 and sees German Pioneers assault a key bridge over the Seine River and then having to hold out against a French counterattack. Sochaczew is a slugfest between the Leibstandarte SS and the determined defenders of the 17th Polish Infantry Division in the suburb of Warsaw in 1939.

Future issues will also include playing tips for veterans and novices alike, play-test news on the massive Central Stalingrad module they are developing for AH/MMP, and articles on all aspects of ASL play.

Work continues on the second issue, which has scenarios set in Bougainville ("Unhappy Trails") and Tunisia ("Devil's Play"). They hope to have the issue ready any time now.

To get a free copy of the first issue send in a SASE or a one year subscription of \$10.00 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling (\$5.00 outside continental USA) to Vic Provost, *Dispatches From The Bunker*, 1454 Northampton St., Holyoke, MA 01040 USA.

Note that in light of the recent action by Avalon Hill against Critical Hit, the plans of third part producers may be subject to change.

Well another year is drawing to a close. I cannot believe it's 3 years since Pete Phillipps and I first got in touch with each other. He was distributing *VFTT* to about a dozen people and I was hoping to put together a tournament for about 20 players at the most. Things have certainly moved on from those days and it's mainly because of all of you reading this very column. I think we all have realised that stashing those modules on the shelves, merely to admire them, is no longer how to get the most out of this hobby. The way to do that is to play.

On the top of this list is regular face-to-face contact with an opponent who lives nearby.

Second on that list is to attend a convention in the calendar year. *BERSERK* in Blackpool is the next so I am looking forward to seeing many of you who were unable to make it to IF'97 up in Blackpool in March. Its back to you, Trev!

Of course if neither of these fits the bill for you you can always play by email or even play *SASL* - for those of you that don't know the new *Timme's Orchard* product from Critical Hit actually includes two *SASL* missions.

And then there is *VASL. Virtual ASL*. For those of you who do not own a computer or a modem - this is the reason to get one. It is effectively a graphical computerised ASL table. All the map-boards are there along with every counter in the system (OK, some of the really obscure ones might not be present right now). A player who has dialled in to his local Internet provider (at local call rates) can then watch an opponent in another country click on a piece and move it to the next hex. It really is AWESOME. Rodney Kinney is the culprit and the reason for skyrocketing telephone bills at 4 Monkton Down Road.

I am currently playing a guy from Brazil at 'Commissar's House'. It is the first time with *VASL* for both of us and we played the first game turn, including German set up time, in about 3 hours. I know that with practice and a few wrinkles ironed out of the system this will dramatically improve. I hope to put together an article for you with a few screen shots for the next *VFTT*; so make sure you remind me Pete.

So another IF'97 is over. As some of you who have called me already will realise I go through a funny patch after IF with regard to the level of stock I hold. I am trying



THE CRUSADERS PRODUCT PRICES

The following price list is effective from 1st November 1997.

Items listed in **BOLD** are temporarily unavailable as a result of the court order issued by Avalon Hill.

For the latest on stock availability telephone The Crusaders on (01258) 459851, or by email at NeilSStevens@compuserve.com.

| | |
|--|---------------|
| <i>Time On Target #1</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Time On Target #2</i> | £14.00 |
| <i>Time On Target #3</i> | £17.60 |
| <i>March Madness Scenario Pack</i> | T.B.A. |
| <i>WCW Colour Scenario Pack</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Critical Hit #1</i> | £6.80 |
| <i>Critical Hit #2</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Critical Hit #3</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Critical Hit #4</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Critical Hit #3-1</i> | £11.00 |
| <i>Critical Hit #4-1</i> | £12.50 |
| <i>Critical Hit Xmas Special</i> | £13.60 |
| <i>SS Schwere 102</i> | £5.60 |
| <i>Jatkosota</i> | £10.20 |
| <i>Soldiers of the Negus (CH Edition)</i> | £12.80 |
| <i>All American</i> | £19.00 |
| <i>All American: Timme's Orchard</i> | T.B.A. |
| <i>Platoon Leader (2nd edition)</i> | £9.60 |
| <i>Armored Stand (PL2.0)</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Paddington Bears '96 Scenario Pack</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Paddington Bears '97 Scenario Pack</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Rout Pack I</i> | £6.80 |
| <i>Rout Pack II</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>OAF Pack I</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Leathernecks</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Gembloux: The Feint</i> | £14.40 |
| <i>Defeating Enemy Armor</i> | £7.20 |
| <i>Schwerpunkt</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>Schwerpunkt II</i> | £9.20 |
| <i>Baraque de Fraiture</i> | £12.75 |
| <i>God Save The King</i> | £16.00 |
| <i>King Of The Hill</i> | £16.00 |
| <i>Berlin: Red Vengeance</i> | T.B.A. |
| <i>ASL News #28</i> | £8.00 |
| <i>ASL News #29</i> | £8.00 |

All orders should have 10% added for postage and packing [EXC: Crusaders are exempt P&P charges] and be sent to Neil Stevens, The Crusaders, 4 Monkton Down Road, Blandford Camp, Blandford Forum, Dorset, DT11 8AE.

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AVALON HILL'S CRITICAL HIT AGAINST CRITICAL HIT

As you will have read on page three, Avalon Hill have taken action against Critical Hit for producing ASL materials. The news was initially announced on the InterNet ASL Mailing List by Louie Tokarz in a message posted on 3rd November. He stated "I've heard that CH is in 'big time' legal trouble. I've heard that the FEDS raided CH and took most of their stock. If this is true anyone who orders something may not get it." The news was confirmed by Curt Schilling (head of research for MMP) a couple of hours later. When asked why others, including Heat of Battle, Kinetic Energy, and Schwerpunkt, had not been raided, he added "I would think that they will be contacted in the near future."

Until now Avalon Hill have actively encouraged others to produce ASL materials. In the *ASL Annual 93a* editor Rex Martin wrote: "I would urge you to continue your support (both through subscription and through submission of articles/scenarios) to the likes of *At The Point*, *Fire For Effect*, *ASL News*, *Rout Report*, and others. These publications have much to contribute to your pleasure of the game system, far more than we can reprint herein. As I've noted in the past, a vibrant amateur press is a sure sign of a healthy hobby. Don't let your support of these fine 'zines lapse in the mistaken belief that you will not miss anything significant. I can assure you that you will." They have even gone so far as to advert the very existence of 'zines in *The General* and the *ASL Annual*.

And yet at the same time they have also taken actions to prevent us from publishing ASL materials. Back in 1991 they threatened Kurt Martin with court action if he tried to publish *The Third Bridge* himself, even though they had no plans to publish it themselves at the time. In 1995 Heat of Battle were forced to stop producing *Blood Reef: Tarawa* and turn it over to AH for publication. Hell, MMP were even forced to stop publishing *Back Blast* in 1995 and *Back Blast* was just a magazine with articles and scenarios!

Curt Schilling noted: "My take (and my take only) is that AH NEVER had a problem with amateur rags (*FFE* included) being published. They tolerated the articles, actually encouraged them, they tolerated publishing scenarios BUT THEY WERE emphatically opposed to amateur rags publishing CG's.", a point noted by several others, including Louie Tokarz: "AH always has made it clear that they don't want others doing CGs and new rules all the way back to the *SL* days."

I'm not sure how is a court going to view the fact that AH tolerated, even encouraged and advertised, one form of ASL material being produced, yet was opposed to another, but it does raise some important questions as to what is (was?) acceptable, and what is not. For example, are the old *SL* scenarios "SL1000 Operation Marston"

or "R220 Clearing The Breskins Pocket" scenarios or CG? What about "SL47 Encircling The Ruhr"? This scenario is played in two parts, with the set up and forces in the second part being affected by the action in the first. Sounds suspiciously like a CG to me.....

What about maps? How can AH have copyright on maps. They certainly don't have copyright on map symbols - the symbols used in ASL for woods have been used in wargames from dozens of companies small and large over the past 40 years.

What about *Baraque de Fraiture*, or the *All American* modules? They certainly aren't CG, just scenario packs with historical map sheets. So these must be OK, right?

How would the Fallschirmjager counters printed in *VFTT13* be a breach of AH copyright? The art on the counters was done for *VFTT* by Klaus Fischer, and looks nothing like AH counter art, other than having 2 or 3 men on the counter.

And if they don't want others doing new rules, where does that leave SSRs. Do *Time On Target's* Bayonet Charges and Special Armour count as new rules or just very long SSRs? Are they SSR if printed on the scenario card but new rules if they are printed separately? Where does that leave a SSR that is printed separately when it applies to half a dozen different scenarios, to save space on the scenario cards (EX: the *Red Barricades* or *Kampfgruppe Peiper* SSR?).

As you can see, there is a very grey area between what is acceptable and what is (apparently) not.

However, there is one area AH has solid ground to stand on, and that is in the area of counter art. AH copyright is clearly being violated by anyone who does not have permission from AH to use their artwork. Many of the third party producers have used AH counter art on their scenario cards. Indeed, even Critical Hit did so until the appearance of *CH4*, in which Ray Tapio himself noted: "We take our publishing efforts here very seriously, in an era of the hobby where others are perfecting the art of cloning AH's look for counters and scenarios. We urge these parties to reconsider their position if they are serious about continu-

ing to be a publishing force in the hobby. We have hired a reputable law firm specialising in Copyright and Intellectual Properties law and have made strenuous efforts to design our new, proprietary line of counters, clip art and a new scenario presentation format." Elsewhere in the same issue we were greeted by the appearance of the new CH scenario card layout and counter art.

For myself, back in May 96 I asked for permission to continue using AH counter art on *VFTT* scenarios, having just produced my first scenario cards featuring counter art (scenarios *VFTT3* and *VFTT4* in *VFTT7*). In August 96 (having done two additional scenarios in *VFTT8*) I finally received the following message from Jack Dott:

"Thank you for letter of 5/20 which I am now only able to respond.

Last time I responded to a similar request the spam fall out was deafening... Many feel we are being too heavy handed in protecting our intellectual property. Because this is how we make our livelihood, we feel it best to follow the advice of our legal counsel to protect the names, appearances and content of our games under the Patent, Trademark and Copyright laws of the United States. In no way can we endorse or condone appropriation of our content."

Since then I have not included AH counter art on *VFTT* scenarios, although admittedly this is mainly because I haven't produced any new scenarios (unless you count the joke scenario last issue). And in view of the action taken against CH, I have decided that I shall not include the scenario cards with *VFTT '95*, *VFTT7* and *VFTT8* until the matter is resolved (although the latter two are out of stock at the moment so this doesn't really have much effect! As far as *VFTT '95* is concerned though, I shall either forward the cards if it becomes OK to do so, or simply forward written details of each scenario). The same also applies to the British SASL tables in *VFTT11*.

The action also raises concerns about the growing electronic ASL scene. Will AH crack down on ASL web pages - after all, Paramount has done the same on people hosting Star Trek web sites. There is also an electronic ASL newsletter, the *ASL Di-*

gest, which is distributed to subscribers and made available to non-subscribers on Jeff Shields' web page (at <http://www.vims.edu/~jeff/digest.htm> for those who are interested). Will AH take action against people producing free software for ASL, such as Kevin Pietersen who produces *ASLAP*, or Rodney Kinney and Carl Fung who have produced *VASL*, a system for playing ASL online?

Without the third party producers, people will be faced with having their work published by AH or not at all. What do they do if AH refuse their submission because it is not good enough, or AH decide there is no market for the item (even if a small minority actually want to see that product)? Previously, they could have published it themselves (and many did), but not anymore. Without the option of self publishing, anything AH turn down will never see the light of day. Would "Soldiers of the Negus" have been printed by AH - I doubt it. Did AH have any plans to print a module on Arnhem Bridge? Hill 112? Tarawa? What about Korea, Vietnam, Modern ASL? Why should some be detained a product simply because AH think the market is so small that it isn't worth them doing?

Curt Schilling noted: "We're working our hardest to re-establish ASL on the wargamers shelf. If you look at what has happened since MMP took on ASL with AH you'll see that the store shelves are no longer bare."

Yeah, you've got *Schwerpunkt*, *Schwerpunkt II*, three issues of *Time On Target*, a dozen scenario packs from Critical Hit, half a dozen issues of *Critical Hit* magazine, modules on actions at Arnhem Bridge, Hill 112, Berlin, Baraque de Fraiture. Would all of this have been on the shelves next to *Pegasus Bridge* and the two MMP annuals without the third parties? Of course not. AH aren't the only ones who have been working hard to re-establish ASL, the third party producers have been doing the same. In fact, without the third parties, the shelves would still look somewhat bare.

And there is also a substantial amount of third party *HASL* projects out there waiting to be published, including *Stonne Heights*, *The Third Bridge*, *Eben Emael*, and *Edson's Ridge*.

It has been suggested that a royalty payment be made to AH in exchange for permission to produce ASL materials. A flat fee would force small publishers like myself out of the market (a fee of \$500, about £320 would mean I would have to charge £5 an issue to break even). A percentage of

sales fee would be awkward to collect from small publishers such as myself (hmm, let's see, 1% of £200 is £2, which at the current exchange rate is about \$3.20. Can't see AH being too happy to receive a cheque for \$3.20 every couple of months somehow...)

Eddie Zeman of Heat of Battle commented that he was doing it for a love of the hobby and not for profit, which led Curt Schilling to respond "This is where it has become a problem. There are some who discontinued working for love and have begun to work for the dollar, look at the price of some of the amateur stuff out there and tell me it was done for love....no chance." I think this reveals what the problem boils down to; AH are pissed off with other people making money out of their intellectual property.

Some people think that smaller publishers like myself have nothing to worry about, but I wish I could share their confidence. There isn't anything to separate the rest of us from CH, apart from the fact that we sell less than CH. And I don't think that will save us. Otherwise, how will it be all right for us to sell 200 copies, but not all right for CH to sell 2000 copies? After all, copyright infringement is copyright infringement, whether you make money out of it or not.

"Sides, here at *VFTT* I try to make a profit too!! And I'm not too far off, as I basically am breaking even nowadays. For each new subscriber I attract my profit (IE sales minus costs) increases by about £2 per year. So with just 50 new readers I would be making £100 per year out of *VFTT*. What if I attract 100 news readers (£200). 500 new readers (£1000 - and possible to achieve if I can break into the American market). How will AH view this? Will they insist I reduce my price so that I continue to break even? What if my circulation decreases (because retailers are put off the idea of stocking an 'illegal' product, for example). Does that mean I am allowed to increase my price!

And the planned scenario packs and *Platoon Leader* CG in the works for next year will certainly make *VFTT* into a profitable business (maybe not into the CH level, but modestly profitable nonetheless). And the plan is to produce at least one pack a year, so next year wouldn't be a one off profit year.

Yes, AH has encouraged amateur stuff until now. But that was when it was just that - amateurish. But nowadays anyone with a PC, some DTP software and a laser or ink jet printer (which readily be purchased for less than £1000) can produce professional-looking material. And as we all have a desire to better ourselves, so we want

to make our amateur efforts better, and more professional. And as the quality goes up, so does the price. Until eventually we are doing something as good as, or even better than, the professionals.

Unfortunately for us smaller producers we are gonna get caught by the AH action whether we like it or not :-). After all, Jack Dott says "If you produce or distribute products which infringe on our marks, or trade on our "look and feel" we urge you to cease and desist immediately.", which suggests that EVERY ONE of us may have to stop..... (although I don't think they can say that *VFTT* trades on their "look and feel"). I guess the question in law is whether or not producing a derivative of someone else's property without their permission infringes on their copyright. If it does, then we are all in trouble.

CH has been the first target because they have the biggest profile, being the ones who produce the most new ASL material in a year. I don't think it'll be too long before the rest of us are targeted, although it'll take them a bit longer to cross the pond to catch me!!

This action raises a lot of issues and I think we shall see some serious repercussions ripple throughout the ASL world in the next few months. I hope that both Avalon Hill and Critical Hit can come to some sort of amicable arrangement over these matters which allows all of us to continue producing ASL material, thus allowing our hobby to continue to flourish. If not, I fear that this action will end the current healthy state of the hobby. And if AH turn their backs on ASL again like they did in the early nineties, this time there will be no-one else to rescue the game from oblivion.

Hopefully I will be able to keep you informed of developments in future issues of *VFTT*.

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STOP PRESS: As this issue was about to be printed (November 12th) Brian Youse, president of MMP, announced online that he had been asked by AH's attorneys to attend a settlement meeting between AH and CH.

THE BRITS ARE COMING!!

How The British Took ASLOK XIII By Storm
Neil Stevens

I started to plan my trip to ASLOK as soon as INTENSIVE FIRE '96 had finished. The first and most important activity was to break it in, very gently, to the wife;

“Darling, I would like to go to America for about a week.”

“Oh?”

“On my own.”

“Oh!”

“To play ASL.”

“What?!?!?!?”

Of course with nearly a year to go before the event it did not seem too unpalatable an idea to her at that stage and as I had casually mentioned it in passing it did not fully register. However full agreement had to be carefully obtained, so I chipped away over a period of time and gradually, any resistance from the better half crumbled. Yes, I was actually going to the States to play ASL. Naturally I threw in the offer, at the appropriate time, that she was more than welcome to accompany me, but this was dismissed off-hand;

“What would I do stuck in a hotel all day while you are off playing your silly games?”

Phew! That was a bit of a gamble but it paid off!

It was about this time that I seriously started to play some regular Face-to-Face gaming with Dave Schofield. He lived about

15 miles away and we had bumped into each other through the ASL Internet Mailing List. Dave was relatively new to ASL but after a few days spent in the he was easily persuaded that he ought to be going to ASLOK too and so the scheming entered a new, joint, phase.

Before we knew it we were making our last preparations to go. I had booked the time off work in February so there could be no complaints from the boss and it was soon time for us to pick up the US Dollars from the bank. The air tickets, which took us on a BA flight from Heathrow to Cleveland, USA via Philadelphia, cost us £385.00 each which included insurance. Medical insurance was an additional £50.00 and the hotel, which we had booked in advance, was going to cost us US \$74.00 per night but the room could cope with up to 4 persons. We hooked up with Paul Case so split the cost of the room 3 ways for our 7 night stay. Meals still had to be paid for but we were assured there was a host of cheap fast food joints immediately outside the hotel that would fulfil our every need. We each took about £200.00 worth of US Dollars for spending money and for purchasing the myriad of ASL related material we expected to be available.

But by far the most difficult decision we had to make was what ASL game components to take. We discussed this endlessly over the Internet with the other travellers to the States but did not really reach a firm conclusion until just before our departure.

In the end we each decided to each take one nationality's full OOB and we took a couple of the historical modules so that we did not have to carry all 43 game boards with us. In actual fact all I ended up using was my dice and my rule book. There were plenty of willing and helpful volunteers to assist with game components and a big thank you to everybody reading this who was able to assist.

The flight itself was long and uneventful but we were kept going by the racing adrenaline of the anticipated gaming. A beer in Philly airport was our first taste of the native ale and at about 9.00pm local time we finally reached the airport in Cleveland. There we enthusiastically leapt onto the Holiday Inn Hotel shuttle service and half an hour later we pitched up at this really rather splendid hotel on the outskirts of the City. Unfortunately the hotel was not expecting us. When politely enquiring if there were any other Holiday Inns in Cleveland the answer came back; “Only about 13!” We had definitely failed our Straying Task Check at the airport it seemed! The hotel shuttle service kindly returned us to the airport where we waited and alighted on the correct bus. Dave and I finally pitched up at the hotel at about 10.30pm where we found a rather the worse for wear Paul Case gibbering incoherently at the reception: waiting for us. What's more he was in possession of all his ASL gear including every game board! The room had been booked in my name so they would not let him in! The place was not quite as grand as our first hotel but much closer to the airport and at least they were expecting us. Thank goodness. We dropped our kit in the room, took a beer at the bar and then, exhausted, crashed out on the beds. It was at this stage that Dave opened his bag to find all of his game marker counters scattered everywhere inside his bag where his tray had opened up on the journey. Paul and I laughed ourselves gently to sleep as Dave, cursing roundly in his native Scouse, tipped all his counters out onto his bed and started to sort them out ready for the morning.

Because of the difference in time between the States and the UK I woke at around 4.00am. Realising that we were all awake we switched the lights on and decided to get up because it was useless trying to sleep. Dave was first, springing out



BERSERK! Organiser Trev Edwards (right) smiles for the camera even as his ASLOK losing streak continues! At least he didn't let the others British attendees down!

of his bed heading for the shower. Instantaneously Paul and I noticed that Dave had a -1 Acquisition counter stuck on his naked backside and we dissolved into fits of laughter. Dave really must sort out his counter storage system!!!!

We eventually found out that we could get a coffee at the 24hr Dunking Donut which soon made us feel a little more human. We then hung around until some more intrepid ASLers showed up. The first guys we stumbled in to were; the Kiwis! They had come further than us to the Convention and they were out for blood! Aaron Cleavin had soon taken me to the cleaners for my first, and no means last, loss of the week. However honour was salvaged, to a certain degree, by Dave who beat two of the Kiwis in competition games later in the week for a total UK v Kiwi score of 2-4.

From this point on the tourney began to grow. More and more turned up with the real bunfighting starting on the Wednesday evening with the CRITICAL HIT party. What a party Ray Tapio throws! Plenty of free beer, great and very lively company and a really good insight into the future work and activities of the CRITICAL HIT team. This was a great evening and the reason behind my first hangover of the week - thanks Ray! By this time I had racked up 4 straight losses in terms of ASL games and had been on the receiving end of about 2 King Size Wimpy Burgers and one Big Mac! We were well and truly settled into the good ole' US of A.

The tourney activities for real start on the Thursday morning with the beginning of the theme based mini-tourneys. These are an excellent idea. Players form into groups

of 8 and play until an overall winner is found. Themes were many and varied and included; Paras, 1939, 1941, Stalingrad, Battle of the Bulge, PTO, Critical Hit, Time on Target, and so on. Players sign up at 8.00am (Gulp!) and crack on under the control of Mark Nixon. The winners play each other twice until there is a theme champion after 3 straight games. The champion is then presented with a suitable plaque and a few dollars in cash for his efforts. The Thursday theme tourney games count towards the "GROFAZ" or the main event to determine the ASLOK champion. This is a straight Win/Loss event where the winner will be the person who has won most games and lost least, if indeed any. The play for this continues on over Friday, Saturday and culminates on Sunday. Having been eliminated from the GROFAZ for losing any of your games then there are more mini-theme tourneys that can be joined in with on Friday and Saturday. However by Saturday we were having trouble getting out of bed on time so missed this opportunity - its 8.00am sharp or you are on your own; No Quarter is in effect! During the mini themes Dave picked up a Champions plaque by remaining undefeated in the Pete Shelling play test theme. Pete had some very interesting scenarios on offer for testing and Dave picked himself up a plaque named the "Wrong Way Shelling Prize". Apparently Pete is continually getting lost when navigating and this is a bit of an "in" joke at ASLOK. This has not helped Dave though who, since arriving home, has yet to con-



Brian Martuzas demonstrates Blood Reef: Tarawa. You need three sets of counters from CoB and GH! to play it!

vince his wife that the prize was not a booby prize for firing artillery on his own troops! But well done, Dave. We were all very envious and those of you who have since attended INTENSIVE FIRE '97 will undoubtedly have seen Dave sporting his trophy proudly around the gaming room.

As Sunday arrived and our time was nearly over people started to disappear rather rapidly. At this stage I realised I had taken no photos at all so I quickly ran around for some snaps before the battle finally subsided. Mike McGrath and Steve Pleva were duking it out for the title playing one of the scenarios from the new *Schwerpunkt II* pack. It was great to watch these guys play. They were both playing something brand new, so no sharking here, and it was refreshing to see their style of play which actually involved them helping each other out. They did not need to resort to the QRDC at all as they played and it was good fun to sit and watch through to see the ASLOK '97 GROFAZ Championship decided before my very own eyes. So congratulations to Mike McGrath from all of the UK contingent. Both of these gentlemen are extremely good players and if you look closely at the photo you will notice Mr Pleva sporting a rather attractive INTENSIVE FIRE '96 tee-shirt!

As the gaming drew to a close the final fanatics hung on to the end in a room at the top of the hotel where the last gaming was done. Mark Nixon chilled out with a beer and watched the Cleveland Indians playing baseball on the TV. Bruno Nitrosso and Russ Bunten struck up a game of ASL ice hockey on one of the ocean overlays. If I remember correctly the "puck" was a Demolition Charge - so don't hit it too hard!!! Dave and I looked at each other and decided to play a final scenario. At this stage I had won



The experts in action! Despite sporting a rather fetching INTENSIVE FIRE '95 t-shirt, Steve Pleva (left) was unable to stop Mike McGrath beating him at "The Slaughter At Krutik" (from the newly released Schwerpunkt II) in the final round of ASLOK.

6 and lost 9 so was feeling reasonably proud of my record. Dave's record was more or less the other way around in terms of Win/Losses and he had played a couple more games. I had been hankering to play 'Red Waves' from one of the new annual being inspired by the thought of those glorious Russian Human Waves. Dave agreed to take the Germans and admitted to me that he had played it during the tourney and had easily won as the Germans and regarded it as being pro-German. However he had not reckoned on my dice making up for a week of poor (my excuse anyway!) DRs and my Russians were unstoppable. Despite a first turn which saw my not very well planned human wave run out of steam close to the German MG nests because of the damned grain quickly become a mass of broken conscripts, things quickly picked up for the Russians with the appearance of their tricky little T-26s. These tankettes just drove straight into the face of the German defensive position. Dave sitting there rather confidently soon had an ashen look on his face as his 75mm Inf Gun malfunctioned on its first shot at a tank followed immediately by his MMG rolling another set of clickety-clicks. One of the tanks then overran his Gun Crew and the other sat in motion on the HMG while the Russian infantry got their act together and advanced into position for some Close Combat. Numerous shots from Dave's LMG up on the hill into the rear target facing of the tanks proved ineffective, although he did manage to take out one of the tankettes eventually in bypass by using street fighting, but it left his leader and squad helpless as 3 conscript squads and a Commissar jumped in in the Advance Phase and eliminated his killer stack and best leader with an ambush and a cool CC dice throw.

So the week ended on a real high as I "beat on" my regular FTF opponent sat up on the 5th floor in the Holiday Inn. The long journey home was a bit of an anti-climax after a week of frantic and draining gaming activity and we both cautiously admitted to each other on the flight back that we would have liked to have stayed even longer; despite the fact that we both missed our families. In all 6 British guys attended this years event which is a great showing; so well done to Shaun Carter, Trev Edwards, Mike Rhodes, Paul Case and Dave Schofield.

You never know, one year someone reading this column right now might well scoop the GROFAZ Championship. Now there's a thought

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MY FIRST INTENSIVE FIRE

Martin Hubley

This is a report from my first ever INTENSIVE FIRE '97. If any of my opponents are out there feel free to jump in and correct my memory.

First, Friday PM after the Tank Museum, played "Only the Enemy in Front", a *VFTT* scenario where a German HT mounted force of 4-6-8s and a StuG try to take out a British Carrier and AC force of 458s on the canal board, backed up with one six pounder. I won as the German against Ian Daghish after a bad start (I tried to flank the Brit set up with some of my HTs and had one (with a 9-1 and squad and LMG) flamed by a HIP PIAT and HS I stopped adjacent too. Recovered well though and won on CVP when Ian got too aggressive with Carriers, using them to overrun some of my infantry, which killed two in CC. Got an AC with the Stug, and that was the game. Didn't have to take the objectives. We made a lot of stupid mistakes (I forgot to cover the bridge with the Stug on GT1, Ian forgot to bring in his ACs on GT1) in this warm-up. 1-0

Second, Saturday AM played the same scenario (chosen by my opponent, John Fletcher, who had horrible luck throughout) as the first of the tourney, and played the Brit. I had the great advantage of essentially copying but improving upon Ian's Brit set-up, unloading the Bren C to use its PIAT and HS as infantry, while keeping the other two Bren As as mobile reinforcements/LMGs, but out of LOS. I got very lucky when my opponent drove his StuG into LOS of my ATG in Q9, but it took five/five rate shots before I put it down. After that, I had the psychological and armour edge - used the Humber to run down three German HT, one fully loaded. He never recovered, and never got near the objectives. 2-0 (Martin starts having delusions of grandeur and thinks of

prizes to be won)

Third, played the 'Tractor Works' as the Russian. Actually wanted to play a more complicated mass armour scenario ('Directive Number Three') which I had never seen, but my opponent (whose name I forget, but he was British Army and had a large bottle of whisky for that UK house rule...) (*Which is anyone rolling snake-eyes must take a shot of whiskey - or half a lager if you don't like spirits! Pete*) wanted to stick with the safe basics. I couldn't break through the two squads and MGs the German had in the stone building to the NW of the factory, as he rolled eight/eight snakes to eventually clean me out by T5. Not pretty. And this despite playing with the house rule. Didn't help me much, and I tried to convince them it should be the other way round to dull the pain, unsuccessfully. 2-1, Martin brought back down to earth.

Sunday, AM, played 'Taylor Made Defence' from *Pegasus Bridge*, as Jerry. An excellent scenario, perhaps one of the best I've played. I almost lost as my opponent, John Kennedy, had a good defence and was again had hot dice, rolling snakes against a stack of three squads (I know, I know, never stack, but how else do you get into CC with a 638 and win when you only have 467s, and only one hex of cover adjacent to it?) I managed to get into the tip of the British held sector of town under heavy smoke and after winning a CC, using a ? German 467 against a wounded 638 and winning (I've learned those RB lessons). All looked lost as I quickly lost a PzIV to a ? Piat at range 3 after foolishly driving too close, and the Marder lost HE on his first shot and Smoke on his second. However, the squaddies rallied, I got back in with some good Prep Fire shots from my 16FP 8-1 killstack and some more Smoke, and the brutal CC slugout was

on. This one ended with the surviving Brits (a 458 and Heroic 9-1 I think) against the surviving Germans (3 squads and assorted MGs, or something like that) in Melee. The only other Brit unit was an adjacent 638 and a HS/PIAT 8-1. The 638 fired into the melee in the stone building, promptly getting a K/2 result leaving me with a pinned GO HS, and a lot of broken Germans. However, he flubbed his CC attack, I got a K, withdrew the broken units. In my turn 5 my useless Marder drove around to this flank (after a second PzIV was recalled when he malf'd and X'd his MA) and promptly fired four AP rounds killing an 8-1, HS and PIAT outside the melee. In his turn 5, 638 jumps into the melee, I rally the boys. He flubs his CC roll again, as do I. My turn 6, The Marder fires in with another 3 or four AP rounds into the melee, breaking the HS, and I reinforce the melee with everything I have

killing all around me. German win, 3-1 final record.

The Tank Museum is definitely worth the trip for anyone who ever finds themselves in south England. King Tigers are a lot bigger than they look in those little pictures...

And of course many thanks to Neil Stevens and his assistants for putting on an excellent tourney - this was my first ever competition, and I recommend the experience of going to an event like this if you get the chance, no matter what level you are at, if only to meet other opponents, and discover they live around the corner from you!

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AN AMERICAN ASLer AT INTENSIVE FIRE '97

Kurt Martin

I had the opportunity to sneak over to the UK last week for a bit of gaming. Talk about cramming - I must be a loser to go overseas for just long enough to hit an ASL event and then come home. But from the east side of the US, you can sometimes do it for \$300.

INTENSIVE FIRE has been quietly going for a couple of years now and is showing serious signs of maturity - 70+ players, great location with good lighting, lots of tables, etc. For my fellow Yanks, let me just spell out what was different 'over there'. There are lessons to be learned in terms of fighting full metal geekness:

Lovely hotel, with lounge and decent rooms. Not some backwater by the airport!

Small bar serving adult beverages, right in the gaming area!

People who speak English really good.

A short walk to the English Channel (the body of water, not some cable channel..).

Really spectacular weather (although I've been told it's not always that nice in England..).

Lots of really excessively attractive women (although none, as usual, in the gaming area).

A right jolly collection of scenarios - Neil Stevens has no fear of offending any 'powers that be' - he put in a wide array of stuff and expected people to play them.

Solid organisation. Major '7-0' Stevens stayed right at the front desk the whole time, tabulating up-to-the-minute results on a laptop. Modern guy that he is, he kept everyone in the know about the team standings. Very solid. Prizes were beautiful engraved mugs, t-shirts are tres cool (full colour evil Kraut para next to brave Brit para, photo style).

Great product displays. Neil had just about every cool current ASL thing on display. *Timme's Orchard*, *View From The Trenches*, *ASL News* - you name it (*and that doesn't include all the TOT stuff that had sold out by Friday morning!!* - Pete).

I found it easy to end up 0600 with a fresh pint in my hands and, alternately, with some still in my mitt.

On the weird side, we discovered that the Brits really DO have a superior sense of humour. They especially like making fun of Americans, but are way too nice to do it to

| INTENSIVE FIRE '97 FIRE TEAM RESULTS | | | | | |
|---|--|-------|----------------|---|-------|
| ELITE DIVISION | | | FIRST DIVISION | | |
| Place | | Pts | Place | | Pts |
| 1st | FIRETEAM 15 Toby Pilling Mike Rudd Joe Arthur | 16.75 | 1st | FIRETEAM 18 Chris Courtiour Chris Littlejohn Kevin Beard | 14.75 |
| 2nd | FIRETEAM 9 Dave Schofield Simon Stevens Paul O' Donald | 14.75 | 2nd | FIRETEAM 10 Aaron Sibley Ian Pollard Burnham Fox | 12.75 |
| 3rd | FIRETEAM 3 Derek Tocher Dominic McGrath Scott Greenman | 13.75 | 3rd | FIRETEAM 4 Justin Key Keith Bristow Tim Macaire | 12.00 |
| 4th | FIRETEAM 5 Nick Edelsten Peter Bennett Bob Eburne | 13.00 | 4th | FIRETEAM 14 Phil Nobo Simon Morris Jon Williams | 10.50 |
| 5th | FIRETEAM 1 Ian Daglish Philippe Leonard Iain McKay | 12.25 | 5th | FIRETEAM 6 Shaun Carter Bill Hensby Stefan Jacobi | 10.25 |
| 6th | FIRETEAM 19 Peter Ladwein Luc Schonkeren Mel Falk | 12.00 | 6th | FIRETEAM 8 Bill Durrant Brian Hooper Martin Hubley | 9.50 |
| 7th | FIRETEAM 11 Arthur Garlick Trevor Edwards Steve Thomas | 9.50 | 7th | FIRETEAM 12 Roger Cook Paul Case Grant Pettit | 9.50 |
| 8th | FIRETEAM 7 Frank Tinschert Armin Deppe Nigel Ashcroft | 9.25 | 8th | FIRETEAM 16 Carl Sizmur John Kennedy Tim Collier | 9.25 |
| 9th | FIRETEAM 17 Michael Hastrup-Leth Bjarne Hansen Jacob Norgaard | 9.00 | 9th | FIRETEAM 20 Nick Quinn Joel Berridge Graham Worsfold | 6.75 |
| 10th | FIRETEAM 13 Luis Calcada Eric Baker Lee Bray | 8.00 | 10th | FIRETEAM 2 John Fletcher Martin Bryan Steve Allen | 6.25 |

your face. Most of the time. And for those of you who missed ASLOK, we did again have the pleasure of taking some shots at Trevor "The Mad King", Shaun Cassidy Carter, David "Call Me Honest" Schofield and the rest of the "lads."

I managed to do some quality gaming while there, but never in the expected manner. Always in the middle of the night... But I did take advantage of my nocturnal leanings to see the moon over the channel, and thought of young men looking over that same water 53 years ago...

For you old-timers, Most Strange of All - an actual Eric The Red sighting! Gads! (That would be the Eric the Red that actually helped spawn the HASL genre...).

In short, should you ever feel so foolish, an ASL experience in Europe has a richness that can't be denied.

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THE CRUSADERS

OPEN ASL TOURNAMENT LADDER

Derek Tocher

As some of you are aware Neil Stevens and I have been discussing the setting up of an AREA ladder ranking British ASLers for some time now. The need for such a ladder comes about because, as those of you with web access will know, the latest AREA listing (August 1997) still does not include the results from INTENSIVE FIRE '96 or BERSERK '97.

My first inclination was to set up a system which would be an exact mirror of the ASL AREA ratings maintained by Russ Gifford. Over several months I came to realise that maintaining such a mirror would be impractical as there are four mechanism by which results can be submitted to Russ and the chances of all submissions going via me were slight. Nevertheless, rather than abandon the idea altogether I decided we should have a ranking system and we would base it on players' performance in Crusaders recognised tournaments.

All players participating in a British

ASL tournament will receive a ranking and all games played at the tournament (both competition and friendly) will be used in calculating new rankings. I will endeavour to produce a new ranking within a month of each tournament.

Players will have an initial rating of 3000 and points will be won and lost depending on the difference in rating points between the two players as shown on the table.

The OPEN part of the ladder title I take very seriously and for a tournament to qualify for the Ladder it must be widely advertised with a substantial number of participants drawn from around the country. If anyone is thinking of running a tournament and would like to discuss whether their event qualifies then I will be happy to hear from them.

The ranking which accompanies this article is based on play at the three INTENSIVE FIRE tournaments and the single BERSERK tournament staged so far. The

next rated tournament will be BERSERK '98 in March.

Mike Rudd unsurprisingly heads the current ranking with his consistent INTENSIVE FIRE record (seventeen straight wins!). However to encourage those of you nearer the opposite end of the table let me tell you that Carl Sizmur was rated about 80th prior to IF'97 but his 7-0 record at that tournament netted him 630 points and shot him into second place (Carl, we'll be watching closely to see if this elevated position can be maintained) so there is hope for us all. This also illustrates an important point about the way ratings are calculated: overall win/loss record is less important than who you play and I hope this will encourage tournament participants to seek out similarly rated players for their friendly games.

Let me close by saying I will be happy to receive any feedback you like to send (just don't ask me to recalculate the numbers!). Contact me at 19 Tyrrell Square, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3SD, by phone on 0181 687

THE CRUSADERS OPEN ASL TOURNAMENT LADDER

| POS. | NAME | PLAYED | PTS. | POS. | NAME | PLAYED | PTS. | POS. | NAME | PLAYED | PTS. |
|------|-----------------------|--------|------|------|-----------------------------|--------|------|------|--------------------|--------|------|
| 1 | Mike Rudd | 21 | 3630 | 41 | Steve Thomas | 21 | 3080 | 81 | Justin Key | 3 | 2910 |
| 2 | Carl Sizmur | 16 | 3515 | 42 | Bjarne Hansen | 5 | 3075 | 82 | Dominic Mcgrath | 18 | 2905 |
| 3 | Peter Bennett | 11 | 3420 | 43 | Robin Langston | 9 | 3075 | 83 | Andrew Saunders | 12 | 2890 |
| 4 | Toby Pilling | 10 | 3385 | 44 | Steve Allen | 3 | 3070 | 84 | Shaun Carter | 9 | 2885 |
| 5 | Paul O'Donald | 28 | 3375 | 45 | Jean-Luc Baas | 3 | 3070 | 85 | Jakob Norgaard | 6 | 2885 |
| 6 | Kevin Beard | 10 | 3365 | 46 | Serge Bettencourt | 3 | 3070 | 86 | Andrew Dando | 14 | 2880 |
| 7 | Brent Ribom | 5 | 3350 | 47 | Robert Schaaf | 3 | 3070 | 87 | Iain Mckay | 11 | 2870 |
| 8 | Nick Edelston | 16 | 3310 | 48 | Alexander Rousse-Lacordaire | 4 | 3065 | 88 | Lutz Pietschker | 4 | 2860 |
| 9 | Philippe Leonard | 9 | 3285 | 49 | Derek Tocher | 25 | 3060 | 89 | Neil Piggot | 4 | 2860 |
| 10 | Ralf Krusat | 6 | 3280 | 50 | Jon Williams | 11 | 3060 | 90 | Paul Saunders | 8 | 2855 |
| 11 | Patrick Manlig | 6 | 3280 | 51 | Stefan Jacobi | 11 | 3050 | 91 | Nick Angelopoulos | 5 | 2850 |
| 12 | Nick Ranson | 6 | 3280 | 52 | Bernard Savage | 11 | 3050 | 92 | Martin Bryan | 4 | 2850 |
| 13 | Alan Smees | 4 | 3280 | 53 | Scott Greenman | 8 | 3045 | 93 | John Sharp | 2 | 2850 |
| 14 | Dave Booth | 7 | 3270 | 54 | Ian Pollard | 20 | 3030 | 94 | Aaron Sibley | 27 | 2850 |
| 15 | Joe Arthur | 13 | 3255 | 55 | Peter Hofland | 4 | 3025 | 95 | Michael Rhodes | 17 | 2840 |
| 16 | Dave Schofield | 18 | 3240 | 56 | Frank Tinschert | 9 | 3020 | 96 | Lee Bray | 4 | 2830 |
| 17 | Christain Koppmeyer | 13 | 3220 | 57 | Vincent Kamer | 4 | 3015 | 97 | Ian Daglish | 17 | 2820 |
| 18 | Tom Slizewski | 5 | 3215 | 58 | Nick Brown | 3 | 3000 | 98 | Luis Calcada | 18 | 2805 |
| 19 | Klaus Malmstrom | 4 | 3210 | 59 | Martin Hubley | 4 | 3000 | 99 | Alistair Fairbairn | 3 | 2790 |
| 20 | Nils-Gunner Nilsson | 5 | 3210 | 60 | Ian Kenney | 4 | 3000 | 100 | John Fletcher | 3 | 2790 |
| 21 | Yves Tielemans | 3 | 3210 | 61 | Phil Nobo | 11 | 3000 | 101 | William Roberts | 3 | 2790 |
| 22 | Francois Boudrenghien | 3 | 3205 | 62 | Duncan Spencer | 4 | 3000 | 102 | Bryan Brinkman | 5 | 2780 |
| 23 | Chris Courtier | 10 | 3190 | 63 | Eric Baker | 2 | 2985 | 103 | Ulrich Schwela | 5 | 2775 |
| 24 | Jean Devaux | 3 | 3190 | 64 | Burnham Fox | 5 | 2980 | 104 | Graham Worsfold | 3 | 2775 |
| 25 | Bill Durrant | 5 | 3180 | 65 | Mike Stanbridge | 13 | 2965 | 105 | Steve Crowley | 4 | 2770 |
| 26 | Pete Phillipps | 26 | 3180 | 66 | Alex Ganna | 2 | 2945 | 106 | Neil Stevens | 12 | 2770 |
| 27 | Grant Pettit | 7 | 3170 | 67 | Pedro Ramis | 6 | 2945 | 107 | Tim Macaire | 8 | 2765 |
| 28 | Bruno Tielemans | 3 | 3170 | 68 | Peter Ladwein | 13 | 2940 | 108 | Gareth Evans | 4 | 2730 |
| 29 | Mel Falk | 9 | 3160 | 69 | Martin Mayers | 3 | 2940 | 109 | Steve Cocks | 4 | 2720 |
| 30 | Bob Eburne | 15 | 3155 | 70 | Nick Quinn | 3 | 2940 | 110 | Tim Collier | 11 | 2710 |
| 31 | Simon Strevens | 5 | 3145 | 71 | Roger Cook | 17 | 2935 | 111 | Nigel Brown | 12 | 2705 |
| 32 | Keith Bristow | 3 | 3135 | 72 | John Kennedy | 3 | 2930 | 112 | Christain Speis | 5 | 2680 |
| 33 | Frenk Van Der Mey | 5 | 3135 | 73 | Andrea Marchino | 1 | 2930 | 113 | Chris Littlejohn | 11 | 2670 |
| 34 | Michael Hastrup-Leth | 7 | 3130 | 74 | Andy Price | 3 | 2930 | 114 | Nigel Ashcroft | 10 | 2645 |
| 35 | Paul Ryde-Weller | 10 | 3120 | 75 | Armin Deppe | 6 | 2925 | 115 | Brian Hooper | 10 | 2645 |
| 36 | Luc Schonkerren | 5 | 3110 | 76 | Steve Grainger | 1 | 2920 | 116 | Arthur Garlick | 16 | 2525 |
| 37 | Simon Morris | 11 | 3105 | 77 | Bill Hensby | 3 | 2920 | 117 | Paul Case | 15 | 2435 |
| 38 | Lee Brimmicombe-Wood | 6 | 3100 | 78 | Trevor Edwards | 18 | 2915 | | | | |
| 39 | Peter Michels | 4 | 3090 | 79 | Edo Giaroni | 3 | 2915 | | | | |
| 40 | Dirk Beijjaard | 5 | 3080 | 80 | Joel Berridge | 3 | 2910 | | | | |

OLD MACDONALD AND CHAPTER H

Or "Dad, I won't need the Jeep tonight, but can I borrow the .50 cal from it?"
Ian Daghlish

| DIFFERENCE IN RATING POINTS | HIGHER RATED PLAYER WINS: high player gains low player loses this many points: | LOWER RATED PLAYER WINS: high player loses low player gains this many points: | DRAW high player loses low player gains this many points: |
|-----------------------------|---|--|--|
| 0-50 | 70 | 70 | 0 |
| 51-100 | 65 | 75 | 5 |
| 101-150 | 60 | 80 | 10 |
| 151-200 | 55 | 85 | 15 |
| 201-250 | 50 | 90 | 20 |
| 251-300 | 45 | 95 | 25 |
| 301-350 | 40 | 100 | 30 |
| 351-400 | 35 | 105 | 35 |
| 401-450 | 30 | 110 | 40 |
| 451-500 | 25 | 115 | 45 |
| 501-550 | 20 | 120 | 50 |
| 551-600 | 15 | 125 | 55 |
| 601-650 | 10 | 130 | 60 |
| 651-700 | 5 | 135 | 65 |
| 701+ | 0 | 140 | 70 |

Ask most ASL players how familiar they are with Chapter H, and they will probably make some shamefaced apology. Yes, they know they ought to be more familiar with it, and they really do mean to check it out every time they play, but life is short, it's in a separate binder from their rules and sometimes you just don't have

There would have been a picture of the M3 (MMG) HT counter to accompany this article, but I decided to remove it to avoid legal hassles from TAHGC. It sucks, but that's life when lawyers become involved.

Like a sucker, I just looked up Chapter D and let it go at that. Months later, I went back to Chapter H and found I had been right all along.

The key to this article is in the U.S. MULTI-APPLICABLE VEHICLE NOTES. Specifically, E, I, and O.

it with you, and most of what you need is on the back of the 5/8" counters, isn't it?

FIRST: E & I

E and I apply to halftracks, plus the M3A1 Scout Car.

Essentially, 'E' says that although the Vehicle has multiple MGs, only one (the MA, unless it is malfunctioned or disabled) may be manned by the inherent vehicle crew. You will need Passengers to fire the rest.

'I' tells you which MGs the AAMG factor actually represents. Plus, importantly, the 93(a) Annual added that "each MG may be Removed as this given type".

These points are important to the tactical use of Infantry vehicles and especially half-tracks. This subject has been well covered, especially by two articles, with very different emphases. In *Critical Hit #4*, Cpt. Modarelli's article on armoured assault tactics gives a lot of ideas on how MG-armed half-tracks can aid Infantry mobility. By contrast, in *The General Vol. 24 No. 4*, Jon Mishcon's "Arms and Armored Half-Tracks" suggests an 'abandon ship' ploy: how to hide vulnerable half-tracks out of harm's way while utilising their Removed wealth of MGs as Infantry SW.

NEXT: O

This is where we came in: Jeeps. Also DUKWs, various halftracks, some scout cars, and the T8 Reconnaissance Vehicle. The Note simply enables the Vehicles listed to share the ability of halftracks to have their crews Remove MGs (as per D6.631) as they abandon the Vehicle (D5.41). So, if a Jeep rolls low enough to gain an AAMG (strength 2 or 4), it gains an Inherent crew, a CS in

FRENCH TANK FASHION

Tom Repetti

"I've been thinking about the weird French tank designs. Does anybody know the rationale for their IMT French design policy?"

The look for Summer 1940 said "Classic Elegance" with just a hint of sass.

Armour was sloping at daring angles, highlighting the sensuality of the petite turret profile.

Axle bogies were shortened by 50-70 cm for those carefree Parisian summer nights.

Everything was Sans Radio - the Modern Armour Commander can't be tied to the phone!

Some ultra-chic designers were making CMG's that could be repositioned as AAMG's, affording the On-The-Go tanker the most in flexibility.

Yves St. Laurent experimented with green-on-green camouflage designs, while Chanel came forth with a wonderful fragrance-scented smoke round.

While it wasn't exactly the heyday of French armour design, it certainly was several cuts above what the German conquerors came out with in the Fall....

Let's put Chapter H in perspective. It is NOT the world's authority on Vehicles and Guns of WWII, and if anyone quotes it as a source of data, you should be very suspicious of the accuracy and extent of their research. It has far too many inaccuracies and generalisations. But it remains a good - nay, an excellent - compendium of general information, a start point for research if not an always dependable source.

And for game play, familiarity with Chapter H certainly separates the men from the boys.

At BERSERK! '97, I was the Americans in KGP CGII: the Bridge at Cheneux. While planning my strategy, it seemed to me that my ill-equipped Parachute Infantry (82nd ALL AMERICAN, of course!) could do with some beefing up with better SW, so I started the Campaign with my full allowance of two Jeep sections: four Jeeps, each with a good chance of some heavy metal (to be exact: 27.8% chance for each Jeep to gain one 50 cal. HMG; or 30.6% for one MMG). Oh yes, the look on my opponent's face when I started running Concealed 5/8" counters across the map was worth a few CPPs as well.

Only when my Jeeps were revealed did my opponent spoil my fun. "You can't Remove those MGs from the Jeeps. D6.631 specifies halftracks. You can only scrounge them for (British) LMGs. You see, Jeeps did not carry the mounts for those MGs."

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place of its cs, and the ability of that crew to Abandon the Jeep taking with it the 2 or 4 strength MG as (respectively) a dm MMG or dm .50 cal. HMG.

Hereafter, things get complicated. The 93(b) Annual amends US Vehicle Note 30 (only) to say that Passengers may also Remove Secondary MMGs. But do not get carried away: this applies only to Passengers in the US M3 (MMG) and (HMG) halftracks. Otherwise, Removal of vehicular MGs remains strictly the province of vehicular crews!

As regards other nationalities, GERMAN VEHICLE NOTE 58 allows one of the two MGs of the SPW 250/smg and 251/smg (the 3 FP AAMG) to be Removed "by the crew or a Passenger" as a dm HMG. And BRITISH MULTI-APPLICABLE VEHICLE NOTE I is broadly similar to US note O, allowing those (and only those!) Vehicles' crews to Remove MGs when they Abandon their vehicles.

APPENDIX

US NOTE E & I

- # 27 M2 ht
- # 29 M3A1 ht
- # 39 M3A1 sc

US NOTE E only

- # 30 M3ht (MMG) & (HMG)

US NOTE O

- # 31 M4 MC ht
- # 32 M4A1 MC ht
- # 33 M21 MC ht
- # 35 T30 HMC ht
- # 36 T19 HMC ht
- # 40 M20 sc
- # 41 T8 "sc"
- # 52 DUKW
- # 54 Jeep

BRITISH NOTE I

- # 63 M5, M6, M5A1, and M9A1(a) ht
- # 69 White(a) sc
- # 75 DUKW
- # 84 Jeep

Postscript. Also on the subject of E, I, and O: I have been told that the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) has a person who glories in the title of Electronic Information Engineering/Installations Officer - and guess what they call him at work!

AN ALTERNATIVE CRITICAL HIT TABLE

Mike Rudd

ASL restricts PF and big guns firing at most vehicles to either missing or setting them ablaze. Historical accounts indicate that other results did occur, for example King Tigers immobilising Shermans. This table below allows for more variety in results, including some of the more peculiar combat effects reported on the western front. I don't think the table fundamentally alters AFV combat. Perhaps the big tanks are slightly more wary of BAZ shots but so what; SCW are scary to tankers and they can half the BAZ CH risk by going hulldown.

NOTES

- 1 The Alternative Critical Hit Table (ACHT) is used as an optional rule by player agreement or by SSR.
- 2 It replaces the TK DR against vehicles hit by a CH or those hit with a hull by DR=3 by PF, PSK, PIAT or BAZ.
- 3 If ACHT effect is not possible or already affects the vehicle then use normal CH procedures (EX: against a StuG IIIB an ACHT DR of 3 or 10 a normal CH would be resolved).
- 4 In campaign games damage results may not be repaired between scenarios.

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| ALTERNATIVE CRITICAL HIT TABLE | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------|---|
| DR | RESULT | EFFECT |
| 2 | Radio(s) Jammed | Treat AFV as radioless (D14.) |
| 3 | Turret Jammed | Turret fixed in current TCA for rest of scenario |
| 4 | Crew Panic | Crew bail out of undamaged vehicle. |
| 5 | Engine Damaged | From next player turn half speed (MP divided by 2, round up) and require start up DR as if MP uin red (D2.51). |
| 6 | Slow Brew Up | Vehicle wrecked, PRC roll for CS as normal but Blaze placed at the end of the CCPh. |
| 7 | Immobilisation | Roll Immobilisation TC (D5.5). |
| 8 | Vehicle Explodes | Leaves no wreck, Infantry in same Location Pinned, Flame in burnable terrain, other vehicles undamaged, and cheesy grin on opponent's face. |
| 9 | MA Disabled | Crew may take TC to avoid Recall (D3.7) |
| 10 | Weapon Disabled | Random (but not MA) weapon disabled (includes SA, MG, and close defense weapons). |
| 11 | Crew Injured | Mark vehicle with a Stun counter. |
| 12 | Near Miss | Shell sweeps off crew's kit bags and other gear strapped onto vehicle. PRC upset but otherwise unharmed. |

THE CRUSADERS

Continued from page 4

to sort this out but I am in Germany throughout November, so work is not currently helping much. I am also due a new posting (to where I do not yet know) in July/September time next year. I'm keeping my fingers crossed. Whatever happens I am still planning to be involved in IF'98, but it may mean the notice of venue and date may not be given as early as it has been in the past. Bear with me and keep playing ASL.

Yours in gaming,
Neil Stevens

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NON - COM-MUNICATION

*Non-Com: a non-commissioned officer, a squad leader
Communication: to talk, exchange ideas.*

PAUL SAUNDERS, SCOTLAND

Just got the latest issue:-) VERY NICE!
Damaged glider counters at last, I half expected AH to issue them with PB, no luck there. I haven't really had time to read all the way through the mag yet, the PTO stuff seems very interesting especially as I am just reaching the end of an epic email game of Tanigawa's Outpost against Gary Milks, (we've been at it since February!!!!)

The Step Reduction chart is actually from an old *ASL News*; in all fairness, Andrew (Paul's brother - Pete) didn't know this when he sent it in. I forget the authors name, perhaps you could print a one-liner next issue, just in case those nice people from Belgium think we're stealing their hard work! (the chart was originally by Luc Schonkeren, and I did mention it to him at INTENSIVE FIRE '97 last month - thankfully he didn't seem to mind. Pete).

IAN DAGLISH, CHESHIRE

Had an idea following Manchester United's 7-0 win against Barnsley and the 6-1 trouncing of Sheffield Wednesday. A *HASL* variant of my scenario "VFTT6 They Think It's All Over" - Manchester United are 11 x Hero counters; any other Premier League side are 11 x 6+1 leaders. Or for a European match, the opponents could exchange one 6+1 for a 9-2....

This letter accepted on behalf of a fellow Manchester United Football Club supporter - me!! So complaining about it will get you nowhere :-) Pete.

BRIAN YOUSE, U.S.A.

Nice piece on jungle tactics, except I don't agree with the portion about defending along the gully. In my opinion there is a stronger defence of that position if you move up to the gully instead of leaving the 1 hex zone.

Keep up the good work.

MARK MCGILCHRIST, AUSTRALIA

First of all, thanks for the latest copy of *VFTT*. I still haven't got any new copies of *ROF* to return the favour, but I hope that will change this weekend.

A little bit of errata I'm afraid. On page 15, 'Brush - Kunai' should be 'Grain - Kunai'.

Otherwise I was very pleased to see my name in print, particularly next to the likes of Tom Repetti and Ian Daghish.

I was also very impressed to see the Damaged and Wrecked Glider counters. I copied this sheet on a colour copier, changing white to green, to get a set of Green Damaged Gliders. Two b/w copies of the Wrecked Glider counters and I now have a set of 26 counters with Damaged Green Gliders on the face, and white Wrecked Gliders on the reverse. They're not professional quality, but very functional, and two are gracing *Cemetery Hill* even as I type, replacing the "Wounded" Glider and the Truck wreck. Thanks!

P.S. Next time the laser printer breaks,

get a colour one! (Well I've got a colour ink jet printer since then, all I need now is the money to do colour reproductions! Pete).

LA FEMME FATALE, U.S.A.

Not much time tonight (same as always!) but wanted to zip you a quick note to say Thanks for the magazine!! I am impressed - it looks really good, although I must confess I haven't had much time to delve into it just yet.

I read a few bits and pieces on *All American* - that looks good - and I a funny piece about how to pick us Yanks out from a crowd. I'd say it was pretty accurate! (And yes guys, this IS from a female ASLer. But for her safety though, I'm with-holding her real name and address to save here from you lot! Pete).

EDDIE ZEMAN (HEAT OF BATTLE), U.S.A.

Thank you for the copy. I was very pleased by the quality of work that you do. Very nice my friend! Also, thank you for running our ad in your mag. :-D

The most important thing that comes across in your mag is that it is very clear that the hobby of ASL is the your passion. All of the articles were fair and pleasant. They contained detail and were honest. So many of your articles were designed to help the ASLer in his/her hobby.

I was so refreshed by the lack of "ego" that went into your work that I could see myself submitting articles to you to just get involved.

In summary, I found your mag to be genuinely FOR the ASL hobby and player that I will continue to support you.

FRITZ TICHY, AUSTRIA

After our recent replay of "Shanghai in Flames", I meditated about the meat-grinding aspect of PTO. My personal theory is that the brutal infantry aspect of the game gives much of the flavour of this theatre.

I also noted that some of the best scenarios I ever played in PTO are actually devastating butchery.

I don't know about real numbers, but I have played one scenario with 100% loss of total manpower (both sides numbers added = 100%) in "Tigers of Toungoo", now 93% loss in "Shanghai in Flames", I remember about 85% in "KP167" and "White Tigers", and somewhere near 90% in "Maggot Hill".

So I think that a PTO with less than 70% loss is a disappointment (85% in Chinese vs. IJA scenarios).

This is not only an effect due to high CC losses, but due to the nature of the game: The IJA dwindle away until they are gone (and they aren't gone as long as they have some HS and a leader), and the often devastating RtPhs encountered vs. the IJA. In our games most of the eliminated units against the IJA come from failure to rout. A good IJA will drive you nuts once your key units crumble and those orange guys simply pass by and

cut rout routes.

Do others have similar experiences/opinion/kill percentages?

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DEBRIEFING

The following Q&A was posted to the InterNet ASL Mailing List by Heat of Battle for *Berlin: Red Vengeance*.

RePh 8.6071 Add: "All FB RG may not be retained regardless of whether they entered the play area or not. Such units are not considered eliminated for Victory Conditions nor CVP total unless they were destroyed during play."

CG14 As I understand this rule, ANY location [EXC: Bridges] with a Good Order MMC is a Strategic Location?
A. Correct.

CG14 I'm not sure about the implications of Bridge's being No Man's Land. Suppose the Germans have a Strategic Location at both ends of the bridge, can they set up ON the bridge? Can the Germans set up ON the Bridges in the initial CGS?
A. This is my error. It should read: "All non-bridge river/canal hexes are No Man's Land..."

CG17 Are these effects cumulative? If two Red Banners are placed is the ELR increased/decreased by two?
A. No, only one Red Banner counter is required to qualify for the ELR bonus. Additional employed Red Banners have no added effect except that all must be removed in order for the ELR to revert back to the normal level for the Germans.

Scenario 8 "Polish Prizes" The Germans should set up on/south of hex-row D and WEST of the Canal.
SSR 3: Delete this SSR (somehow it was transposed from scenario 2).

Scenario 2 "Run For Your Lives" SSR 4: Should include one Roadblock and one Barricade for the German OB.

Q. Why am I being so anal you ask?
A. Because you are smart and will stop at nothing to win!

The following errata for *Schwerpunkt II* was posted to the InterNet ASL Mailing List by Evan Sherry.

Scenario SP17 "Cross of Lorraine" The German balance should read "American OB."

Scenario SP22 "Tod's Last Stand" The German SAN is 3.

The following errata and clarifications regarding the Paddington Bears scenario packs from Critical Hit, Inc. was posted to the InterNet ASL Mailing List by Mark McGilchrist.

The '97 PB Pack was sent to Critical Hit as a 10 scenario pack, with an additional three scenarios sent for the Critical Hit magazine. It has been reported to us by purchasers that the 97 PB Pack contains 8 scenarios PBP 11-18, and that PBP 19-20 are contained in *Critical Hit Vol.4 No.2*, along with the three additional scenarios numbers PB-CH A-C.

Scenario PBP5 "US Forces" The Victory Conditions should be read as 5 of the 7 indicated objectives, with entire building K8 being a single objective.

Scenario PBP "Marked For Death" The French AFV depicted is an AMD-35 Armoured Car. There should be two of these AC.

The following errata applies to the *ASL News* pack.

Scenario ASL News 48 The French Infantry/ATG group sets up on Board 41, East of row N (not inclusive), as per the outline on the set-up diagram.

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ON THE CONVENTION TRAIL

There are more and more *ASL* tournaments cropping up all over the world. In fact, it is possible to be involved in an *ASL* tournament at least once a month, often more, if you were so inclined (and had the financial means to live such a life - I wish!).

If you plan on holding an *ASL* tournament, please let me know and I'll include the details here, space permitting.

JANUARY

ASL WINTER OFFENSIVE 1998

When: 16 - 18 January. Friday 1800 Hours - Sunday 1800 Hours

Where: The Comfort Inn, US Route 301 at US Route 50, Bowie MD 20718. Tel 301-464-0089. Mention Winter Offensive for special room rate of \$57/night.

Fee: weekend registration \$15 (\$20 after 01/01/98), one day registration \$ 8 (\$10 after 01/01/98)

Format: Unstructured format, mutually agreeable scenarios, minimum of five scenarios needed to qualify. All games AREA rated. Cash prizes based on attendance, plus special 1st place trophy.

Notes: Sponsored by Multi-Man Publishing. Winter Offensive supports all levels of play, from beginner to expert. Whether you are trying to expand your *ASL* horizons, boost your AREA rating, or just get in a few games against fun opponents in a non-pressure situation, Winter Offensive is the place for you. Returning this year will be the on-your-honor keg of beer; at \$1.00 a pop, you can easily have a good excuse for losing. Don't forget to order your WO '98 tee-shirts (\$10 L, XL; \$12 XXL) which once again feature winter combat artwork. Please make checks payable to Multi-Man Publishing and contact:

Contact: Brian Youse 309 Chase Hill Court, Severn, MD 21144, tel 410-519-1862 or by email at byouse@erols.com or Perry Cocke 1664 Forest Park Ave Baltimore, MD 21207, tel 410-944-3342 or by email at perry.cocke@ssa.gov or p.cocke@genie.geis.com.

Pre-registration contest: Who has won each of the following at least once - *ASLOK*, *Avaloncon* and *WO*? How many times? Winning entry (before 01/01/98) receives rebate of registration fee (or equivalent prize).

WEST COAST MELEE

When: 30 January - 1 February, Friday 1200 Hours - Sunday 1600 Hours.

Where: The Wyndham Garden Hotel, Culver City, California. The hotel is located 15 minutes north of LA International Airport and the hotel provides a free courtesy shuttle from/to the airport. Overnight accommodation at the hotel is \$79.00 for double, triple and quad and \$69.00 for a single. Contact the hotel directly to make room reservations at (310) 641-7740 by January 9, 1998. Ensure you mention the Southern California *ASL* Club as the organisation for the room block. If you would like us to assist you in finding roommates, just send me an email.

Fee: \$20.00 if paid by 16 January, \$25.00 thereafter.

Format: Seven round tournament, following the same format as *Avaloncon* and the *ASL* Open that allows a player to reject any one scenario in each round. The *WCW* scoring system will be used. To give cardboard commanders a little bit of a challenge, the scenarios will not be publicised in advance and will be distributed at the beginning of each round.

Notes: All the scenarios are published and selected from *Avalon Hill* and independent designers like *TOT*, *CH*, *Paddington Bears*, *Schwerpunkt*, *WCW* and others. The scenarios in each round will vary in complexity to meet the skill level of newbies and experienced players alike.

Contact: Kent Smoak, tel (213) 296-3830 or by email at ksmoak@earthlink.net.

FEBRUARY

MARCH

BERSERK '98

When: 13 - 15 March.

Where: Hotel Skye, South Promenade, Blackpool, Lancashire, England.

Fee: £7.00 (£5.00 for members of The Crusaders).

Format: Four round Swiss style tournament, with scenarios set b the organisers. The facility to play *CG* and other long scenarios is also available.

Notes: Although the tournament is for the Friday - Sunday, players turning up on Thursday can be accommodated.

Contact: Steve Thomas, 19 Derwent House, Samuel Street, Preston, Lancs., PR1 4YJ,

or email Trev Edwards on Trev@cableinet.co.uk.

MARCH MADNESS '98

When: 13 - 15 March.

Where: Holiday Inn/Holidome, Overland Park, Kansas, United States of America

Fee: To be announced.

Format: To be announced.

Notes: We cannot promise you a new *MM Scenario Pak* along with this year's edition of the tournament, but that is solely due to time constraints involved in producing a quality product rather than any 'legal' issues.

Contact: Mike Reed by email at mreed@sky.net.

APRIL

FLORIDA ASL TOURNAMENT

When: 17 - 19 April.

Where: Best Western Resort & Convention Center, 820 W. Busch Blvd. Tampa, Florida, United States of America. Telephone (813) 933-4011. Rooms are \$59.00 per night.

Fee: Admission to the event is \$10.00. Registration will be at the door since the HMGS are the actual hosts.

Format: The *ASL* event will start on Saturday at 8:00 AM. It will be a similar in format to our past event. Many all new scenarios from the Tampa *ASL* group will be featured. Drop me a line if you plan to attend.

Notes: The tournament is being piggy backed with the local Historical Miniature Gaming Society spring event called RECON.

Contact: Evan Sherry by email at sfww@scfn.thpl.lib.fl.us.

CHICAGO ASL OPEN

When: 24 - 26 April.

Where: Chicago, Illinois, United States of America.

Fee: To be announced.

Format: To be announced.

Notes:

Contact: Louie Tokarz, 708-857-7060, or by email at MGLouie@AOL.com.

MAY

MONTREAL ASL FESTIVAL

When: 2-3 May.

Where: Montreal, Quebec, Canada.

Fee: To be announced.

Format: To be announced.

Notes:

Contact: Michael Rodgers at 104774.3113@compuserve.com.

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PREP FIRE

Continued from page 2

holiday with wife and children - keeping your time away short and the cost low should make it easier for you to sell it to the wife!

Of course, for those able to spend more time there would be the opportunity to stay Friday, maybe even Thursday if there is enough demand.

So, is there a demand? Write in and let me know, and if a dozen or more of you are interested I'll have to start getting something organised!

Until next time, whenever that may be, roll low and prosper.

Pete Phillipps

Double 1. My last, best hope for victory.

HOW GOOD ARE YOU AT ASL?

Whether average or advanced, you might be able to play a vital part in developing an *Historical ASL* module for publication.

Some very experienced players are already playtesting *ALL AMERICAN: Shanley's Hill*, the final part of the All American series. But the module needs to appeal to players of all levels of experience, so whatever your level, if you have the time to play a half dozen or so scenarios and return reports to a tight time scale, I'd like to hear from you. The reward? Your name in the credits, a free copy on publication, and (I hope) a degree of enjoyment.

Please contact (soon!):

Ian Daglish at 5 Swiss Hill Mews, Alderley Edge, Cheshire SK9 7DP
idadgfish@aol.com

BERSERK!

BLACKPOOL '98

ADVANCED SQUAD LEADER TOURNAMENT

13TH, 14TH AND 15TH MARCH (FRIDAY THROUGH SUNDAY) 1998
HOTEL SKYE, SOUTH PROMENADE, BLACKPOOL, LANCASHIRE

THE EVENT

Last March some 30 avid ASL fans gathered in Blackpool and had a really great weekend of ASL. We are pleased to be able to invite you to the second of these, now annual, events.

The tournament will be an individual player event in the Swiss style. Each player will play four rounds against opposition with a similar win/loss record over the three days. Scenarios will be set by the organisers. Last year the two unbeaten players at the end of the four rounds agreed to a playoff for first and second place in a fifth round final.

Also on offer, for those of you not wishing to take part in a tournament, is the facility to play one of those Campaign Games or long scenarios that you could never play at home. Last year one team played the massive "Beast at Bay" and another played "The Bridge at Cheneux" from KGP. Alternatively, you can usually find a friendly game at any time. Last year several players arrived on the Thursday evening and play started then.

THE VENUE

Hotel Skye overlooks the South Shore Promenade of Blackpool. It is -literally- a hundred yards from the Pleasure Beach and railway station. We will have the hotel to ourselves (no non convention guests) and the proprietor has made it plain that he will strive to make our weekend enjoyable.

THE COST

Entry in the convention is £7.00.
Crusaders get in for only £5.00.

Hotel Prices are as follows:

B&B - *for a shared room* £18.00
B&B - *for a single room* £21.00

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

Steve Thomas,
19 Derwent House
Samuel Street
PRESTON
Lancs.
PR1 4YJ

or e-mail Trevor Edwards
Trev@cableinet.co.uk

